

# *ALUMNI COMMEMORATIVE TRIBUTES*

*40 Years Dedicated To Advancing Diversity in Engineering and  
STEM*



A. JAMES CLARK  
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

CENTER FOR MINORITIES IN SCIENCE  
AND ENGINEERING

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

*The University of Maryland Center for Minorities in Science and  
Engineering*

*40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Staff Recognition  
1981-2021*

*Boeing 40th Anniversary Initiatives Lead Sponsor  
Whiting Turner 40th Anniversary Initiatives Lead Sponsor  
Leidos 40th Anniversary Initiatives Co- Sponsor*

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## 40 YEARS OF GRATITUDE

Alumni, students and colleagues applaud CMSE Staff for 40 years of heart work bringing with them a wealth of compassion, knowledge and skill. Each of whom, through service, developed a commitment, dedication, and loyalty to propel the CMSE mission to provide retention and support programs to underrepresented minority (URM) students in engineering and other STEM majors and graduate underrepresented minority students.

People say one person can't make a difference in the world...  
but We know that isn't true, because We've seen  
the difference you make in the lives of those around you.

The forty years of incredible CMSE service has been a generous gift to the University of Maryland Community and had a global impact through Alumni Achievements. Each staff has had a "special" gift of service as your hands, feet, voice, actions and love has been expressed for four decades in MANY different ways. Thanks for your willingness to give of yourself and make a difference in the world.



Alumni Banquet 1996



Alumni Banquet 1996



Alumni Banquet 2001



Alumni Banquet 2001



Alumni Banquet 2012



Alumni Banquet 2013

## **Our Tributes**

### **Brian D. Hayes – 2007**



CMSE took a young wayward, undisciplined but motivated student and set me on a trajectory I never thought was possible. I owe my career, confidence, academic success, and many friendships to countless CMSE staff. There are too many too name but I want to give a special thank you to: Ms. Rosemary Parker, LaWanda Kamalidiin, and Tamara Hamilton. CMSE has helped me reach my full potential by strategically placing me in positions to succeed early and later on in my educational journey. There were numerous obstacles I encountered while in the Clark School of Engineering some emotional, some educational, and some financial. CSME provided me support in each of the areas I needed it going above and beyond their creed. One example from the Summer Bridge program was when I started I was not very good at writing, and my English skills were subpar. By the end of the summer due to the care and attention of the staff, my writing improved so much so that I finished with an A in the class. That is just one of many examples I could provide. Professionally, Ms. Parker, Ms. Nadine Simpson, Ms. Kamalidiin, and Ms. Hamilton have helped me make lifelong connections that have made a difference in the roles I have had within and outside of academia. Most have kept in touch many years later to make sure I still had the support I need. I cannot thank them enough for everything they have done. I could write a novel on the many ways CMSE

has helped me personally and many other colleagues. From helping me secure funding for graduate school for a Master's degree at GT when I was not even sure I should/could. To making sure I finished with my Ph.D. when I wasn't sure I could/should finish after many stressful years.

### **Monica Watkins – 1994**



For anyone who ever spoke with Celestine (my mother) when I first started University of Maryland to the day I graduated, it is very likely that you heard her praising the Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering and the BRIDGE program. "The Center" and the program were lifelines to many of us who started at this humungous predominantly white institution in a very competitive field of study. James N. Newton and Rosemary L. Parker were the knowledgeable and firm hands we needed before we knew what we needed to survive and excel in the engineering program. Their advocacy, attention and thoughtfulness were critical in guiding us on our scholastic journey. Their impact on our lives also forged relationships among us that still flourish 32 plus years later! I don't ever recall a time when they were not accessible to us for advice, a listening ear and even scolding as necessary! However, after they delivered their messages to us, one left feeling cared for, supported and empowered. I am so thankful to "The Center" family, and especially Mr. Newton and Rosemary, for encouraging, molding, guiding and nurturing us as young students and contributing significantly to the successful engineers and professionals we are today.

### **Delmar Gillus – 1993**



I wanted to reach out and say thank you for all that you have done for me and offer any support I can provide to and the students. It is hard to believe that I graduated over 25 years ago, but the more time passes, the more appreciation I have for all the support, guidance and patience that Rosemary and LaWanda provided me while a student. I always knew that no matter the circumstance "The Center" had my back. This was even more apparent after I graduated and heard the stories that co-workers told that didn't have the support system I had. While I never took it for granted, I could have thanked both of you more...I would not be doing what I do, with the role that I have without you both supporting me along the way. One of the many things I learned while at Maryland was the value of community and helping each other. A very important lesson I learned was not only how to ask for help, but how to help others. We had a strong support system where we reinforced each other in times of need. It's something I've tried to carry forward.

## **Our Tributes**

### **Lyndon Brown – 2004**

Ms. Parker has had a bigger impact on my academic and professional life than any other teacher or administration. Her work through the center and associated programs gave me the support I needed to excel academically and pursue my dreams. She is responsible for a generation of minority engineers that are building the future - and I am indebted to her and her team for opening their doors to me.



### **Alice Sesay-Pope – 1995**

I am grateful that CMSE was an available resource to me at UMCP. My engineering experience changed my life and legacy forever. My engineering education was the foundation that positioned me for opportunities to make a global business impact. Today, I manage a global operation at Visa, Inc. of almost 2000 people with fiscal responsibility of \$300 million dollars. Thank you...CMSE! Thank you Rosemary and Lawanda for your service.



### **Rashad Johnson – 2013**

The beginning of my journey with CMSE started from the Summer Bridge Program back in 2008. As a result, I met students and faculty who would, later on, help shape my path via the student organizations that CMSE advised. Early on Ms. Tamara Hamilton, Ms. LaWanda Kamalidiin, and Ms. Rosemary Parker would remain a common fixture during my undergrad year. As I would become involved in one of the student orgs and spent much of my time at the CMSE office space. Throughout this time I was given the opportunities to not only get involved in programs and events as a result of guidance from everyone, but I would also transition to a position of leadership within SCORE, as Treasurer and then President. As I reached the end of my undergraduate studies, I would find myself receiving a wealth of advice from Ms. Parker who, if not for all her patience and much needed encouragement, would be part of my motivation to finally walk the stage.





## ***Our Tributes***

### **Bryan St. George – 1998**



The most important thing I remember is how the CMSE was always the calm harbor in whatever storm was going on; would always be able to go to the Center and know that there would be a friendly face to take the edge off the stress of the day. That friendliness started at the top; Miss Rosemary and Miss LaWanda set the tone, there was never a bad day. That level of calm is very hard to find, and to be able to maintain it for as long as the Center staff has is well worth recognizing, and celebrating.

### **Erika Alexander - 1995**



As an active member of NSBE and a constant in the BES lounge, I had a front row view of the academic frustrations of the Black students trying to traverse the engineering and mathematical concepts as well as the politics of academia. Rosemary, LaWanda and staff were our greatest resources and advocates. They provided both the academic and emotional support many of us needed as we were navigating, at that time, the toughest years of our lives. Always present with advice, wisdom and encouragement, CMSE has been a catalyst for cultivating great minds and citizens. Its impact has been invaluable for me as I have encountered many decision points in both my professional and personal lives.

### **Tershia Pinder-Grover – 1999**



I am so grateful for this opportunity to share how much the Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering has meant to me, but more importantly how much I appreciate Rosemary Parker and the entire staff. As one of a few people of Color in my major, it was the center that helped create a home for me. The kind of support they provided helped me to excel academically, professionally, and socially. Rosemary Parker's personal care and visionary leadership made a difference in my life. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

### **Santiago Vivas - SHPE President – 2016**



CMSE has been integral to my entire UMD experience since day 1 starting with the BRIDGE program. I have felt included and part of a community which has fostered many friendships and connections, as well as provided critical guidance, resources, and support I could not have done without in my time at UMD. CMSE allowed me to be successful in my endeavors with SHPE, helped make what is already a great organization even better. I would like to give special thanks to Mrs. Parker and Mrs. K for always being there for me and the other students. I would not be where I am today without the support of CMSE's wonderful programs and staff. Thank you CMSE and congrats on 40 years!

## **Our Tributes**

### **Terri Jo Carroll-Haves – 1985**



I have a heart of gratitude to the former Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering (CMSE) Director, Mr. Jim Newton, who, through his excellent leadership, was instrumental in preparing young minds to accept great challenges and excel. Obtaining my ChemE degree was one of the most challenging tasks I have undertaken in life. From the beginning, I sought advisement from CMSE; and I leaned on and leveraged the Center throughout my time at the University of Maryland (UMD). It became my on-campus home. Mr. Newton was very popular among the students. He cared about and listened to us, was full of wisdom, and was approachable (with a good sense of humor too!). This type of mentorship and advocacy was invaluable in navigating a rigorous engineering program. Aside from our 1:1 meetings, Mr. Newton supported us in many ways: he ensured we had a safe place to study together in the lounge, sponsored our Black Engineering Society (BES) meetings (of course this included Ledo's), and facilitated our attendance at BES conferences, where we interviewed for jobs and broadened our industry understanding. Once when asked during a panel discussion to discuss mechanisms for my undergraduate success, I immediately noted, "Mr. Newton and Rosemary". They gave back in many ways, and each of us that walked through the CMSE doors are better people today because of that experience. I have decided to continue paying it forward! When I think about the many blessings in my life, CMSE, including the supportive relationship cultivated with Ms. Rosemary Parker, is certainly one of them. Ms. Parker was not only my advisor; she was my champion. Her guidance and support, on behalf of CMSE, were instrumental in my academic achievements. On May 23, 1985, I received the degree, B.S. Chemical Engineering. I was one of two

minority females in the graduating class. During the 1980s, UMD's engineering program was rigorous and well-respected. I was not as prepared for the journey as I intended. I learned quickly that I had a challenging road ahead. This was around the time that I connected with CMSE and met Rosemary Parker, my Advisor, and Jim Newton, the Director. They were quite an inspiring team. As I became more involved in my studies, I began having more frequent check-ins with Ms. Parker. She always made time for me, and I valued her sage advice. In addition to being quite knowledgeable, resourceful, and connected, Ms. Parker was kind, encouraging, and a good listener. It was not just about the academics with her. She cared and was concerned about our overall well-being. For example, she noticed when I was burning the candle at both ends and spoke to me about getting the proper rest. Sometimes, we even needed to have tough conversations in order to keep me focused and on track. I appreciated those conversations too, as they helped me to grow...and I grew. In addition, my professors recognized my diligence and spoke of it to other professors and students. Ms. Parker's steadfast and consistent commitment to the success of all her students is a rich example of her values in practice. It was through my association with CMSE, that I was blessed to have multiple job offers upon graduation. Achieving a Chemical Engineering degree was one of the most challenging goals that I've pursued and one that I'm most proud of. Ms. Parker has touched many lives in her work. Our successes are a reflection of her love and support. I will always be grateful to UMD for my personal experience and for providing us an oasis, called CMSE, and great mentors like Ms. Parker and Mr. Jim Newton.

### **Marc Butler – 1993**



There is no question that the Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering (CMSE) played an invaluable role in my education, retention and success during my undergraduate years at the University of Maryland, College Park. What I didn't expect were the life-long forged relationships with my mentors, students, staff, role models and leaders that would ensue as a byproduct of my involvement in CMSE. Not enough can be said about the immeasurable guidance offered by Ms. Rosemary L. Parker, Mr. Jim Newton and Ms. LaWanda Kamalidiin for not only the development of me academically, but also preparing me as a young professional. Because of them, I have been inspired to mentor and guide a multitude of other minority students particularly in STEM-related fields and professional careers since graduating from the college of engineering. I am continually impressed with the increased degree of student capability and academic prowess that shines through the assortment of programs offered by CMSE particularly as they have been guided by the wise oversight provided by Ms. Parker, Mr. Newton and Ms. Kamalidiin throughout the years. This is no small task given the evolution of engineering expertise and systems' requirements and business acumen necessary in today's technology workforce and academia. It has been an absolute pleasure to contribute to this overall effort whenever called upon, whether as an advisor, a panelist, a speaker, a mentor, etc. Also impressive is the continual staffing of competent personnel within CMSE to meet the high and challenging demands for achieving respective programs' success. CMSE can be proud that the aforementioned staff (including, for example, India T. Alexander, Michelle Nkechi Udeli and Tamara Hamilton) has advanced all efforts and goals of CMSE to a purpose-driven and competitive level. An even more remarkable surprise is witnessing my own offspring experiencing and receiving instruction through CMSE. At some point, all of my children have been exposed to CMSE – first as participants in one or more of their K-12 programs and then within CMSE's pre-college initiative programs. Two of my children were admitted into the A. James Clark School of Engineering and one has since graduated! Thus, I can personally attest to the multi-generational impact of the CMSE influence, on the academic and professional development of students as future influencers. It is an honor to have experienced and continue to experience CMSE and its valued leadership throughout the years. Congratulations on your enduring success!

## **Our Tributes**

### **Dr. Gary Palmer II – 2007**



The Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering (CMSE) has always worked levers behind the scenes as I was matriculating through the Engineering Program at the University of Maryland. That's something I will always appreciate because you ask alumni from other schools if they have something similar and it doesn't exist at other universities. CMSE's impact on my student and professional life is unmeasurable. CMSE provided an ecosystem where you were able to see and hang out with students who looked like you and were going through the same challenges. At the University of Maryland or any predominantly white institution, it's well-known the disparity of minorities in STEM. If CMSE wasn't there, I wouldn't know which classes to take, what to expect in certain classes, and how to obtain funding. As a part of the BRIDGE Program (participant, mentor, and coordinator) and BES (Finance Chair and President), all of the CMSE staff became family. Ms. Wanda Byrd was always honest and candid whenever I stopped by the office. Taifa and Brooke always had bright smiles and laughter to talk to whenever things seemed grim. Tamara Hamilton always helped me think of what I was doing on campus that would help me prepare for the future. Ms. LaWanda Kamaladiin wanted to make sure I was ok in every aspect of life. She understood that being active in CMSE and being a STEM major was hard, and knew the benefits if I was able to handle both paths

together. Finally, Ms. Rosemary Parker had the vision and saw the potential that I didn't know I had. Every time I wanted to be the shy kid that just did his classwork, she challenged me to be more than that. Thank you to CMSE for the incredible amount of support you've provided me and other minority students to be the very best at anything we wanted to accomplish.

### **Curtis Taylor – 1998**



Thank you to Rosemary Parker and Lawanda Kamalidiin for all of your support, kindness, and guidance during my time at Maryland. Rosemary Parker was my first instructor and motivator when I arrived in the summer bridge program. I can still remember her charge and the strength in her voice of "We want you to get As", "We want those As." She smiled when she said it, but it was understood that she wasn't joking. It was through the bridge program and the exposure to the campus, the classes, and meeting other bridge students that I was able to get off to a great start to my time at Maryland. Ms. Parker and Kamalidiin had an open door policy and whenever I walked into CMSE, I felt welcome and I felt like I had two people who cared about me and wanted me to be successful. They made a space for me and my fellow students to connect and to be uplifted. I remember them as a source of joy and help. For all of these things and more, I am truly thankful to God for them and their legacy of making a difference in the lives of so many students. Thank you for investing a part of your life into mine.

### **Zenia P. Velazquez – 2001**



I extend my sincere appreciation to Ms. LaWanda Kamalidiin for being my engineering advisor. Had I not requested to change my assigned general engineering advisor in the past to you, my life would be totally different. Besides not letting me stop believing in my capabilities, you consistently encouraged me to be better. Through your advice, I did not give up on myself. Thank you for your words of advice when difficulties weighed heavy. I was a first-generation college student from a Salvadoran immigrant family. My parents worked very hard to provide for me but providing guidance in college was even more foreign to them than speaking English. Your guidance throughout my engineering college days in UMD provided much light and needed faith. I would not have graduated as a Latina fire protection engineer and I would not be a program manager I am today at NIH. I am very grateful to you Ms. Kamalidiin because you provided to me what my family could not. I will always appreciate your words of wisdom and for driving my consciousness from a world of difficulties to possibilities.



## **Our Tributes**

### **Antimmario Jackson – 2003**



To Rosemary Parker and CMSE Staff, As a transfer student to UMD's Electrical Engineering Program in Fall 2000, I had a small circle of built-in study buddies that had transferred with me from UMBC. One day while walking through the Glen L Martin Engineering Building, I heard someone say "Good Afternoon. Who are you?" It was Mrs. Parker and she introduced herself to me and informed me of the resources available through CMSE. As my time progressed at College Park, I was able to have numerous interactions with CMSE through Engineering organizations on campus, including Black Engineers Society (BES), Society for Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) and Society of Women Engineers (SWE). I used these relationships to have the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) interact more with the other engineering societies since I was their Service Coordinator and President during my time at UMD. It was precisely these relationships, formed a long time ago that brought me back into contact with CMSE and Mrs. Parker when I moved back to the Maryland area. I was amazed to see Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Kamalidin doing whatever is needed without doubt or hesitation to do the good work they have been called to do - Helping minorities to not only graduate but achieve in the Sciences and Engineering. Getting a glimpse into how CMSE has continued to function/thrive despite dwindling budgets is a testament to CMSE's Mission and the fortitude of its leadership. Thank you so much for what you have done for me and I'm appreciative that you called me out in the hallway of the engineering building over 20 years ago. It's also important for alumni to put money behind their gratitude then CMSE can continue to exist and sponsor programs such as the Winter Student Leadership Retreat.

### **Louis Terry – 2016**

#### **CMSE Impact:**

"As a first-generation Latino student majoring in engineering the path to success was often difficult and daunting. But thanks to the Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering I was able to lean on their support, mentoring, and resources to grow as a student and complete the engineering program even when I thought it was impossible. Many students probably felt that way throughout their academic programs and I'm just so fortunate and thankful that CMSE was able to provide that type of experience for me. Ms. Parker and the entire staff at CMSE have provided this support to countless students and I'm grateful to have been one of them.



#### **Ms. LaWanda Kamalidiin Impact:**

As an undergraduate, I was an active member with SHPE UMD and eventually served on the E-Board, and during that experience, I had the pleasure of getting mentored by Ms. Kamalidiin which had a significant impact on my professional development. Ms. K was the SHPE UMD advisor and she helped pave the way into having an incredibly successful 2015 SHPE National Conference when it was held in Baltimore, MD and SHPE UMD was called to action to help with select hosting activities along with other chapters in the area. I've kept in close contact with Ms. K throughout the years since graduating and have to credit her for helping me transition to post-college life. Thank you so much Ms. K for everything you do for CMSE and SHPE UMD.

#### **Ms. Michelle Udeli Impact:**

I was an LSAMP URP Fellow and was fortunate enough to have Ms. Udeli as our program advisor. I can't thank Ms. Udeli enough for the amount of support, compassion, and dedication she showed to each of her students in the year-long program. Thanks to Ms. Udeli I was able to thrive in a research lab environment which I wasn't entirely comfortable with beforehand and eventually presented at the UMD Undergraduate Research Day. Ms. Udeli had a huge impact on my academic career and taught me valuable lessons that are still applicable in my professional career.



## **Our Tributes**

### **Viviana Monje-Galvan – 2012**



The CMSE has been instrumental in my success. I want to especially thank Ms. Parker and Mrs. Kamalidiin, who met me as a transfer student to UMD and supported me as an LSAMP scholar, CMSE summer staff, all through my Ph.D., even attending my dissertation defense (which meant SO much), and beyond! The entire team at the time, as I am sure every team with the different student cohorts, was very supportive of my course work, professional development, and also mental wellbeing. They were all always willing to talk and discuss my many questions and doubts. Taifa Simpson, India Alexander, Tamara Hamilton, Trinette Young, and Bruk Berhane offered the best support a student could wish for. Through the CMSE I learned about the LSAMP program and had the opportunity to participate as an undergraduate, which opened the way to become a Bridge to the Doctorate Fellow. No doubt, without this fellowship I could not have attended graduate school – period. I had an amazing graduate mentor, but the CMSE was key for me to train as a researcher, speaker, teacher, and mentor. I was so blessed to participate in the many activities, workshops, and well-designed programs through my years at UMD. As an undergraduate, I had a community and a family at the CMSE, which was crucial as an immigrant, in general, and a minority in science. I became the scientist and mentor I am today through

symposia, monthly meetings, presentations and work from my peers, the partnership with PROMISE Alliance, and (last but not least) the social gatherings and community the CMSE builds for UMD students. The CMSE as a whole, the programs, and the staff Ms. Parker leads and inspires supported and pushed me forward during the critical initial years of my academic journey. I am so proud to carry the mission and vision I learned at CMSE as I continue to grow as an independent scientist; it was a privilege to host my first summer undergraduate LSAMP mentee this past summer at my current institution as junior faculty. Thank you Ms. Parker! Happy 40th Anniversary CMSE! Go Terps!!!

### **Kattva E. Via - 1998**

As I roamed through campus my first year at UMD in 1994, I must admit I felt a little lost and lonely. Lost because of the massiveness of the campus in general and lonely because there were not many people like me in my chosen field of study, Civil Engineering. It has been so long ago that I don't quite remember how I ended up at the doors of CMSE (yes, memory gets fuzzy as you get older...LOL) but what I do remember is that once I entered through those doors, all I received was constant encouragement and support from everyone at the Center, especially from Mrs. Parker. Even though I graduated some time ago now, I know that when I visit CMSE in the future, I will be getting the same warm welcome I received all those years ago. Mrs. Parker's positivism and kind personality are unparalleled, and her continued efforts in making sure minorities succeed have become her legacy. Congratulations Mrs. Parker on your well-deserved award and cheers to many more to come!



# *40 Years of CMSE Alumni Wonderful Memories*



NSBE Convention 2015



NSBE Convention 2018



2018 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Recognition and Alumni Celebration



2018 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Recognition and Alumni Celebration



Banquet 2011



2018 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Recognition and Alumni Celebration



Banquet 2013



Banquet 2013



2002 Alumni



# *40 Years of CMSE Alumni Wonderful Memories*



Banquet 1996



Banquet 2001



Alumni Mix and Mingle 2002



2017 Alumni Lunch at NSBE



2019 Alumni at NSBE



Banquet 2013



2018 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Student  
Recognition and Alumni Celebration



CMSE Bridge 2008



2015 Alumni at NSBE



Banquet 2013



CMSE Award Ceremony 2002



CMSE Holiday Celebration 2003